



PRIDE show finale with general manager Fred Richards, fifth from the left, with cast.

TRADE TALK

P RIDE'S big-deal dealer convention to release its 1968 range was the most spectacular and ambitious promotion ever attempted in the Australian boating trade.

While such hoop-de-hoo is well established in the automotive and other big industries, some of us thought it might have been a bit much for boating, and the \$15,000 to \$20,000 the whole affair cost would have been better put to other uses.

But the dealers must have loved it! At the end of the two-day fiesta, sales manager Jim Gilbey said he had taken more than 350 orders.

Naturally, the boats deserve a fair bit of the credit, too. Pride has added four models to fill in some significant gaps in the range, which now numbers 14, and has generally lifted again the standard of styling, finish and fittings.

The convention in Sydney was attended by about 160 dealers, from all Australian States, and Pressmen, and kicked off with spy-like trappings of mysterious, beautiful (and unwinable) 007 girls, round-about Harbor trip to a secret rendezvous (which turned out to be Luna Park).

Curtain-raiser to the boats was a two-hour musical comedy featuring big stage and TV names who sang, danced and joked to a complicated plot centred on the efforts of spies Trent Savage, Natasha De Havilland and Bulldog Bertram to pinch the plans of the new Pride models.

The show, produced and directed by Warwick Freeman for Col Joye Enterprises, featured Brian Henderson, Buster Fiddess, Jackie Weaver, Col Joye, Maggie Dence, Alan Dean, Norm Erskine, Sean Kramer, Brian Davies, Robina Beard, and a stripper who's name and phone number we forget.

The new range, while more expensive, is stronger all round.

The all-new craft are the Flipper (\$1930), a 17ft. Cathedral-hulled craft with a veed central hull and a wind-screen walkthrough to a forward compartment (as in the company's smaller Trident model), the Caprice cruiser (\$3550) — a 19ft. 5in. deep-vee luxury unit with a bulkheaded-off cabin and large cockpit (and a runabout version of this craft), the 15ft. 3in. Fury runabout (\$1220), plus the entirely new (for the range) 14ft. Ski Angler (\$598), the first utility fishing boat produced

by Pride. This has a moderate vee.

All the other models, with the exception of the 15ft. Starfire, have been redesigned, and some renamed.

FIRST factory tour and Press inspection of Klekhaefer Mercury of Australia's new \$1 million outboard motor plant at Dandenong, Vic., in June was also quite a promotion, with an afternoon on the water later for the visitors to test the full range of motors on various Caribbean and Bertram boats.

The factory, covering 75,000 sq. ft. on a ten-acre site, allowing plenty of room for expansion, was established by Herman C. Stieg, previously vice-president and general manager of Klekhaefer Mercury's Toronto, Canada, plant. He is managing director of the Australian company.

With a ripple-aluminium ceiling and domed skylight, the factory's design makes best use of natural light.

Its equipment includes an electronically controlled baked-enamel paint plant.

An overhead conveyor track is used in assembling the motors.

The motors are assembled from major components imported from the U.S.A. Mr. Stieg said that already a high percentage of local content had been introduced and this would continue to increase.

SYDNEY'S oldest ship's chandlers, W. Kopsen and Co., have moved out of the retail marine business.

In future, the firm will act solely as a distributor, concentrating on the marketing and promotion of its speciality agency lines of marine equipment throughout Australia and the South Pacific.

Kopsen's marine engine division will handle the N.S.W. and Qld. distribution of Volvo Penta inboard/outboards, be Australian agents for Vire inboard engines, Ailsa Craig and British Anzani outboards and the new Japanese Kubota marine diesel to be released in Australia before next summer.

The firm will continue to distribute speciality marine hardware, Australian agency products, heavy ship's chandlery and ship's provisioning.

Kopsen's retail store has been taken over by Central Marine, a firm run by brothers Carl and Paul Hutton.

They will continue to handle all Kopsen's lines.

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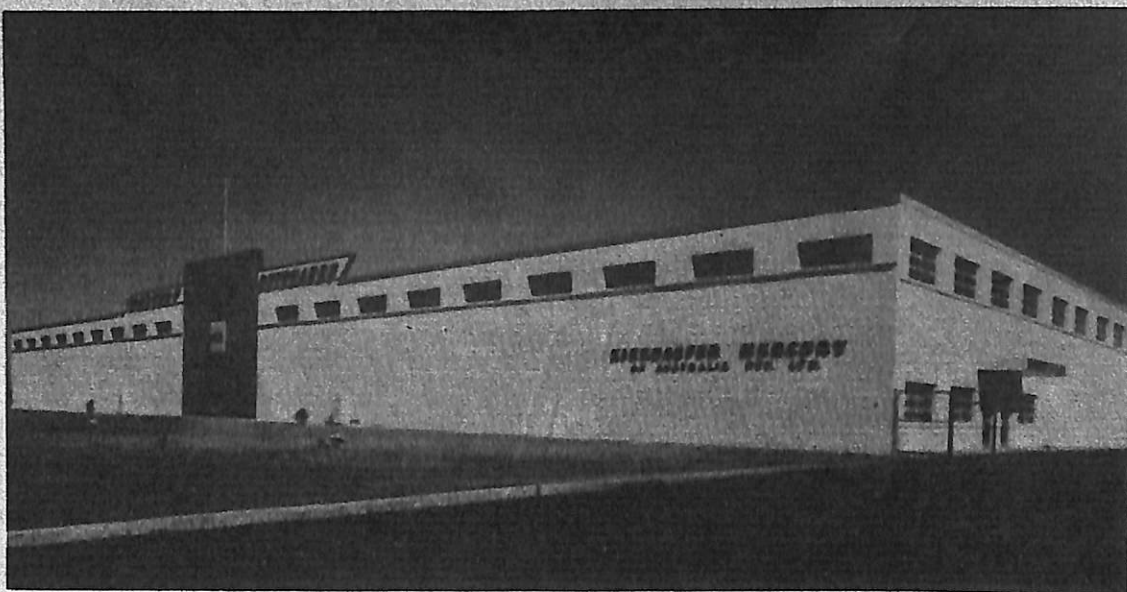
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